

Course I: *Sense of Self*  
"Who Am I? I Am of Great Value"  
Lesson 2

**WHO AM I?**

# ***I AM A PERSON OF GREAT VALUE***

By  
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**Unit 1 - Lesson 2**  
(NewLife Behavior English Edition)

**NewLife**   

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B E H A V I O R  

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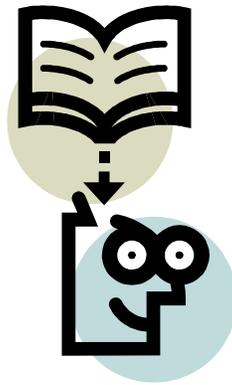
***"If any person be in Christ, he is a new creature . . ."***  
(Second Corinthians 5:17)

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## RESPONSE SHEET

Dear Student,

We have found that thoughtful *written* responses greatly enhance the student's understanding of this material. Therefore, we urge you to use this **RESPONSE SHEET** as an aid in the study of this lesson.



### STEP ONE: BEFORE YOU START

Please write three or four sentences in the box below that describes the value you think God places on you as an individual. Then, put this sheet out of sight until you finish the lesson.

### STEP TWO: PREPARING TO STUDY

Read the **STUDY QUESTIONS** on the last page (do not attempt to answer them at this time). Then read and study Pages 3-10 as you would read a chapter in a book.

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## **“I AM OF GREAT VALUE!”**

Before you begin this lesson, consider how you feel about yourself and your worth as a person. Write your thoughts on the **Response Sheet**. Then, put it away until you finish this lesson

Next, we recommend that you read the entire lesson through the first time without looking up the scriptures. Finally, go back for a more in-depth study before coming the **Study Questions** found on page 11.

### **I. Introduction**

The message of Luke 15 is that every person is valuable. Through the parables of the lost coin, lost sheep and lost son, Jesus taught that any and all efforts are not too great to restore one lost soul. The shepherd left the ninety-nine “safe” sheep to find the lost one. God loves each of us as if we were His only child.

In fact, God would have sent His only Son to die for each of us even if we were the only person who ever lived. He would have made that great sacrifice for *you* only and . . . He did!

We are valuable because every soul is created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7).

Perhaps as a child we might have thought that God has a physical head, eyes, mouth, legs, arms, etc., because that is how *we* look physically. We may have reasoned that it was something similar to the way we may look . . . like our earthly dads by having the same hair color, same facial features, and so forth.

But as we matured, we realized that being in God's image is not a physical image, but a spiritual image, and that we are much more than a physical body – we have a **spirit**. It is this spirit that is in God's image.

The longing that is within man for someone or something greater than Himself is what some call the “God-shaped vacuum”. This vacuum can only be filled with Him. This is our very core, the part of us that is indestructible, living forever.

But some may warn that we are not to think too highly of ourselves (Romans 12:3; First Corinthians 4:6; Second Corinthians 3:5; Galatians 6:3; James 2:1-6; 10-17). Think about it this way . . . If we are not to think more of ourselves than we ought to, that means that we *should* think as highly of ourselves as we ought to.

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While we are not to become puffed up with our own importance in a prideful way, neither are we to consider ourselves as mere protoplasm or cosmic junk.

We are to feel valuable as unique creations of God, planned by Him before the world was created and made to glorify Him (Psalm 139:1-24)!

In this lesson we will learn of God's great love for us and we will see how He has given us a noble lineage, a spiritual mind, a loving purpose and a heavenly destination.

## **II. Reasons for Our Great Value**



### **A. God's Love**

God's love makes us of great value to Him and increases the price He paid for us (John 3:16; Acts 20:28; Romans 5:8). Man is the greatest of all God's creation and He loved us so much that He made us in His own image and likeness (John 1:7; Colossians 1:20-22; First Corinthians 2:14).

Although we were disobedient, God forgave us because of His deep and abiding love (Ephesians 2:4-9).

### **B. We Have God's Image Stamped on Us**

It is our spirit that is made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7-8).

The human brain is a marvel of creation, controlling all parts of the physical body, and is far more intricate and complicated than the most sophisticated computer. However, it is our spirit through which Christ lives (Philippians 2:5; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:23-24; Hebrews 6:6).

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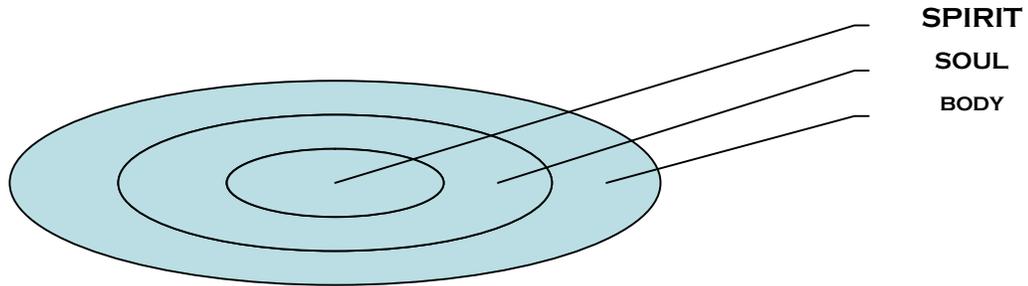


Figure 2-1. The Spirit as Man's Core

Figure 2-1 makes sense to people who think of the spirit as “the innermost being” or the *inner man*.

The soul possesses the ability to reason, to decide and to feel. It includes our mind, our will, our emotions, and our intellect. The body has the five physical senses.

Beyond all of this is our spirit – in an infinite dimension.

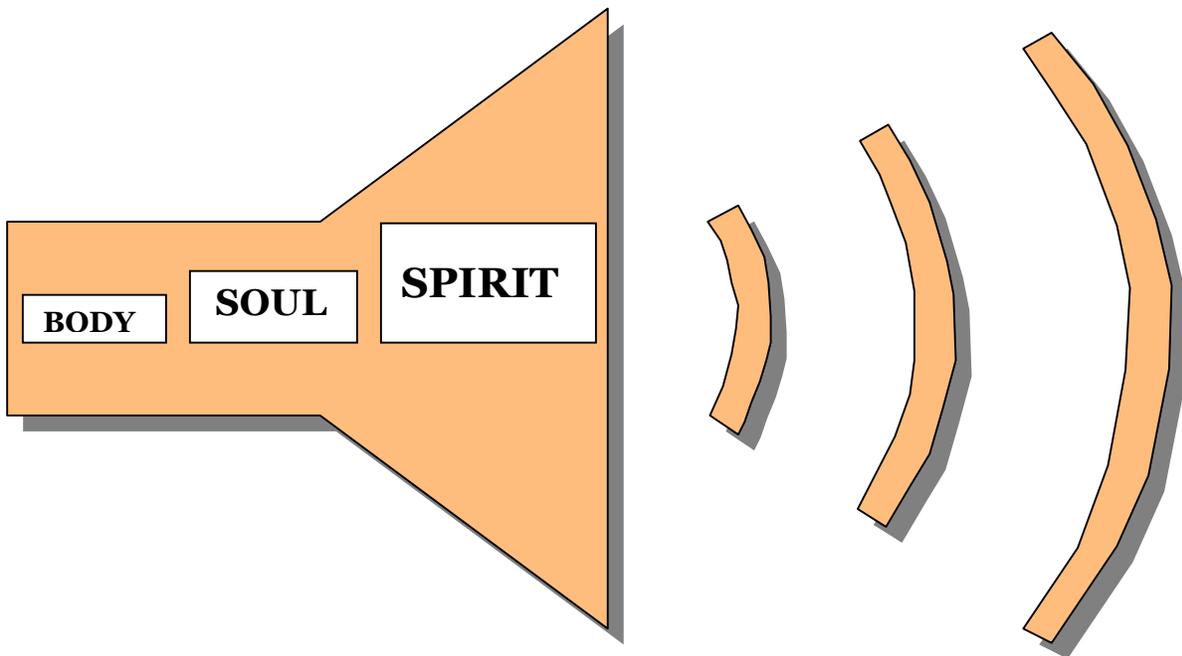


Figure 2-2. The Spirit Has an Unlimited Capacity.

Figure 2-2 makes sense to people who understand that the body – being physical – is the most restricted or confined dimension. The soul, made up of the intellect, the

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will and the motions, is less limited than the body, but not limitless.

The only limitless dimension is the spirit. First Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 both refer to the soul and spirit separately.

The spirit is the core of our being – the part of us truly made in God's image. Through our emotions, our reasoning and our decisions, we can either remain in harmony with our spirit or we can “cover up” or confuse the signals given off by our spirit.

Even worse, we can make our physical dimension (our five senses) so predominant in our mind that it appears to be the only dimension we have that is real!<sup>1</sup>

### **C. We Are Free to Decide**

Unlike the animals of the field or birds of the air who operate by instinct, we humans operate by thinking, feeling and acting (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 23:7; Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 3:16-19). Consequently, we are given the right to choose whether we will seek God or flee from Him. He does not force us to come to Him but longs for us and desires that we love Him because He first loved us (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; 14:27; John 7:37).

Perhaps you have heard it argued that we don't have a choice - that somehow we are “preordained” to be either *good* or *bad*. This is like the old argument that Judas Iscariot had no choice in betraying Jesus because Jesus had to be arrested and crucified in order to fulfill His purpose.



But try this simple experiment. Lift up your right hand. Now, make a fist. Did you make a decision to lift up your hand and make a fist? Could you have decided *not* to lift up your hand? Could you have decided *not* to make a fist? You and only you ultimately decide how you will think or act. You and only you can decide what you will do about God.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on the body, soul and spirit was supplied by Dean Owen.

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**D. We Are Unique Creations**

We are unique creations because we are crowned with *glory* and *honor* (Psalm 8:4-5). We are *fearfully* and *wonderfully* made (Psalm 139:14). The human mechanism is intricately woven together and far exceeds any machine which man has ever made. Our bodies are very delicate yet . . . very strong.

Modern science is continually discovering intricate and wonderful things about how our bodies are made and how they function. Scientists have now isolated genes which carry certain genetic diseases and are learning how to introduce altered genes into the body to completely cure them. What a marvel!

Yet the more our scientists learn, the more we realize that we have discovered only a tiny part of God's design.

**E. We Have a Great Commission** (Matthew 28:19-20)

With Christ dwelling within us, we are commanded to go out into the world and teach His Gospel ("good news" as found in Mark 16:15-16). As *ambassadors for Christ*, we are his "earthen vessels" through which He speaks (Second Corinthians 3:2-3; 4:5-7). We go as His workmen (Second Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17; Philippians 4:13; Romans 1:16; John 13:34-35). Our greatest need is to be reconciled to God, and once we have been reconciled to Him – imperfect though we are – our job is to help others become reconciled to Him (Second Corinthians 5:18-20).



You may have heard the fictional story of Jesus returning to Heaven and being asked if He had finished His work. After reporting that much remained to be done, He was asked what provision He had made for it to be completed. He replied, "I have left men to do it." To this came a reply: "But, what if they *fail*?" Jesus replied, "I have made no other plan." This fictional story illustrates this point – *It is up to us to obey our Lord's instructions!*

The fact that Jesus has entrusted us with so great a mission must mean that we are very important. If one has an important job to do, he picks someone capable of doing it. A country chooses a person of worth to be an ambassador to another country. We are Christ's ambassadors (Second Corinthians 5:20)!

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**F. We Have a Great Future**

God has planned for us to live eternally with Him (John 11:23-26). He has already prepared a mansion for us in Heaven (John 14:1-4; Psalm 23:6). He has planned for us to be where there is no more suffering, no more tears, no more pain and no more death (Revelation 21:4). He has made great preparation for us because we are of great importance to Him.

**G. We Know Our Roots**

Like Jesus, we can serve others because we know who we are, where we came from and where we are going. When you read the account of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples in John 13, notice particularly verse 3 – “Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God.”

1. *Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power.* Like Jesus, we know that God has a great work for us to do and He will give us the power to do it. In fact, we have available to us the same power that raised Jesus from the dead!
2. *Jesus knew that He had come from God.* Also, we can know that we have come from God.
3. *Jesus knew that He was returning to God.* We, too, are returning to God. He has our “mansion” already prepared.
4. *Jesus served others.* By washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus took on the role of a slave or servant. He wants us to serve each other as well.



We can know these same things about ourselves. We know who we are (God's children – princes and princesses in His kingdom – with a royal inheritance). We know where we have come from (our past, our origin) and more importantly – we know where we are going (our future).

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**Table 2-1. We Can Know, Just as Jesus Did**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>JESUS KNEW</b>	<b>WE CAN KNOW</b>
Past	Where Jesus came from (John 13:3)	Where we came from (Genesis 1:26-27)
Future	Where He would go (John 14:12)	We will go (John 14:1-4)
Present	He has power from God (John 13:3)	We have power from above (Philippians 4:13)

*We can serve others.* As we grow in our understanding of who we are, whose we are, our origin and our destination – we will be less concerned with whether other people think we are “somebody” because *we know we are of worth.*

Because Jesus knew who He was, He had nothing to prove, nothing to lose and nothing to hide – *neither do we.* Therefore, we can choose to take on even menial jobs with dignity and love for others, thinking of them instead of ourselves.

Yes, we can know our past, present and future – just as Jesus did – enabling us to serve others like He did.

### **III. Conclusion**

In a loving way, God is concerned about everyone (Psalm 23:6; Romans 1:16; Second Peter 3:9). This concern is personified in His Son (John 3:16). When we consider that no greater love could be shown than for one to lay down his life for another . . . we must conclude that we are of great value because Christ did that for us. He took upon Himself the ultimate consequence for our sins – death and separation from God. He paid the price for our wrong doing so that we would not have to pay for it. He accepted our punishment for us.

The following story illustrates (in a human way) this kind of sacrifice:

During the last year of the Civil War, a man paid a visit to the battlefield of Chickamauga, where, on September 19-20, 1863, the army under General Rosecrans was almost destroyed and was driven back into Chattanooga by the Confederate Army under General Bragg. The battlefield not then, as now, a beautiful and sacramental place, with stately monuments rising amid the trees, but still bore the scars of battle and was furrowed with recent graves. Over one of these new-made graves the visitor saw a man on his knees planting flowers. Walking over to him, he asked, “Is it a son who is buried there?” “No,” the man answered. “An uncle, then, I suppose, or perhaps a brother? At least some relation?” “No,” the man replied. The visitor then said, “May I ask, then, whose memory it is that you cherish and thus honor?” Then the man told why he was there to decorate the grave. He had been drafted into the Confederate Army, and no substitute, as the custom then was, could be procured. Just before he was to say good-bye to his wife and his family and report to the training camp,

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a young man came to see him and said, “You have a wife and family depending upon you. When you are gone you cannot support them, whereas I am unmarried, and have no one depending upon me. Let me go in your place.” The offer was accepted and the young man went off in his place to the training camp. At the battle of Chickamauga he was mortally wounded. The news of his death drifted back to the Southern home of the man whose place he had taken. As soon as he could have sufficient money, he made the journey to Chickamauga and, after a search, found the grave of his friend with its rude marker.

The visitor, much touched by the narrative, went on his way over the battlefield; but coming back he passed this grave again. It was now well covered with flowers, but on a rough board at the head of the grave were cut these four words: “He died for me.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Great Nights of the Bible*, by Clarence E. Macartney, Copyright 1943 by Whitmore and Stone, Abingdon Reprint Library Edition 1980, Nashville, Tennessee.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

1. The message of Luke 15 is that every person is
  - (a) dispensable
  - (b) valuable
  - (c) identical
  - (d) cheap
2. God made us in His
  - (a) own image
  - (b) free-time
  - (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven
  - (d) none of these
3. Our brains are biological, but our minds are
  - (a) mush
  - (b) foggy
  - (c) spiritual
  - (d) worldly
4. Our soul includes our
  - (a) blood, air and gas
  - (b) air, water and vapor
  - (c) spirit, water and condensation
  - (d) intellect, will and emotions
5. Animals operate by instinct. Humans operate by thinking, feeling and
  - (a) acting
  - (b) dreaming
  - (c) breathing
  - (d) sleeping
6. We are free to seek God or
  - (a) flee from Him
  - (b) reject Him
  - (c) ignore Him
  - (d) all these

7. God's work or job for us is called a great
  - (a) depression
  - (b) commission
  - (c) era
  - (d) impression
  
8. God has prepared a place in heaven for us. It is sometimes called
  - (a) a mansion
  - (b) a manatee
  - (c) a monopoly
  - (d) a meadow
  
9. Jesus knew the Father put all things under His feet, that He had come from God and was
  - (a) staying on earth
  - (b) in limbo
  - (c) returning to heaven
  - (d) none of these
  
10. When we know *who we are, whose we are, where we came from and where we are going*, we can
  - (a) forget others
  - (b) serve others
  - (c) ignore others
  - (d) all these

## REFLECTION

Now that you have finished this lesson and without reading your first answer, please write a few sentences in the space below describing how valuable you think you are to God.

## APPLYING THE LESSON

Finally, to gain the most from this study, list one or more ideas from the lesson that you want to use to change your behavior. Also, list any questions you want to ask your instructor or studymate.